

11th August 2008

International officials visit ahead of Sydney's first Chinese New Year Twilight Parade

Preparations are already underway for City of Sydney's 2009 Chinese New Year Festival, with the City proudly welcoming a delegation of Henan Province Officials ahead of the inaugural Sydney Chinese New Year Twilight Parade on Sunday 1st February 2009.

"600 performers from Henan will take part in the parade in the first ever Sydney Chinese New Year Twilight Parade in 2009, which will feature large glowing lanterns representing the animals in the Chinese zodiac, along with dramatic street lighting," said Lord Mayor Clover Moore MP.

"Henan is home to the famous Shaolin Temple, the cradle of Chinese martial arts. With such an incredible heritage, the 600 performers are sure to have something exciting to show Sydney in the inaugural Twilight Parade."

The delegation of Henan Province Officials will arrive in Sydney on 10 August and spend one week meeting with City of Sydney Chinese New Year Festival organisers, to discuss their participation in the upcoming parade. Meetings with the delegation will unite the different elements of the Twilight Parade, joining Henan's floats and 600 performers with 2,000 local participants to create a spectacular new piece of street theatre to entertain the people of Sydney.

"It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome the Henan delegation to Sydney. I am sure their visit will help everyone involved plan for this exciting new event and make 2009 the best Chinese New Year Festival ever seen in Sydney," Ms Moore said

2009 marks the Year of the Ox in the Chinese Zodiac and the 13th year the City of Sydney has produced Sydney's Chinese New Year Festival, which has become the biggest celebration of the Lunar New Year outside of Asia. The celebration recognises the Chinese Community's contribution to the City and is one of the fastest growing and most popular events in the City.

"A record crowd of 80,000 people lined the streets for the Sydney Chinese New Year Parade in 2008, which was the biggest and best our City has ever seen," said Ms Moore.

"The event will be held at night for the first time in 2009. This will make the Twilight Parade on Sunday 1st February 2009 an exciting new spectacle for both parade participants and the ever growing crowd from across Sydney, Australia and the world."

Sydney's Chinese New Year Festival will run from 23rd January to 15th February 2009, celebrating the Year of the Ox, which brings good natured patience combined with physical stamina to influence the year. More than 600,000 people attend the Festival annually, making it one of Sydney's fastest growing and most popular events.

Media Release

CITY OF SYDNEY



The Festival in 2009 will feature more than 50 events including the spectacular Chinese New Year Twilight Parade, the Chinese New Year Markets @Belmore Park, Chinese New Year Festival Dragon Boat Races, the China Business Summit, temple tours, film screenings, art exhibitions and banquets.

CNY09 KEY EVENT DATES AND INFORMATION

Launch Celebrations: *Friday, 23rd January 2009*

Join in the festivities at the Festival Launch, held at the famous Chinese New Year Markets @ Belmore Park from 6:30pm. Featuring lions and dragons, Chinese entertainment and traditional firecrackers, the Launch begins three weeks of celebrations for the arrival of the Year of the Ox.

Chinese New Year Markets @ Belmore Park: *Friday 23rd - Sunday 25th January 2009*

The famous Chinese New Year Markets will be bigger and better in 2009, kicking off with the Launch Celebrations on Friday 23rd January. The markets showcase the very best Chinese gifts, food and produce, with more than 60 stalls open from 4 pm to 10pm on Friday and 11am to 10pm on Saturday and Sunday. Throughout the weekend, there will be a full program of Chinese entertainment to enjoy along with workshops and activities to join such as drumming workshops and cooking demonstrations.

Chinese New Year Twilight Parade: *Sunday 1st February 2009*

The internationally acclaimed Sydney Chinese New Year Parade is an annual highlight of the Festival and will be reborn in 2009 as an evening lantern parade. A record crowd of more than 80,000 lined Sydney's streets performers last year. Starting on George Street in front of Town Hall it will feature more than 2,600 participants, including 600 performers from the Chinese province of Henan.

Dragon Boat Races: *Saturday 7th February and Sunday 8th February 2009*

The Sydney Chinese New Year Festival continues as more than 3,000 participants compete in Dragon Boat Races over two days on the waters of Darling Harbour.

For more information please visit www.sydneychinesenewyear.com.au

Images and footage of Sydney Chinese New Year 2008 are available

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